

THE NEW YORK TIMES, THURSDAY, MAY 24, 1962.

In The Nation

A Proved Breed of Watchdogs Is Available

By ARTHUR KROCK

WASHINGTON, May 23—The recent crop of critical books and articles on covert operations of the Central Intelligence Agency, principally with respect to the U-2 flight, which was downed in Soviet Russia, and the invasion of Cuba, which was repulsed by Premier Castro, has nourished proposals for a Congressional watchdog committee of the C. I. A. Its new Director, John A. McCone, who took office after these events, has already told Congress he has no objection to the establishment of this committee, having worked very well with one when he was chairman of the Atomic Energy Commission.

Presumably, therefore, unless President Kennedy should object to a C. I. A. watchdog group of Congress, and if the formula of its selection were also satisfactory to the President and to Director McCone, there would be no insurmountable Administration obstacles if Congress chose to create this new special committee. And one formula of its selection that is being discussed seems well suited to the basic requirements of the two branches of the Federal Government involved.

Under this formula the House and the Senate would each supply a watchdog committee of nine members. The two would act separately in general and jointly when this was found desirable by both. The House group would be composed of the chairmen of the Committees on Foreign Affairs, Armed Services and Appropriations, the ranking majority members of these three and the ranking minority members. The Senate group would be formed of the chairmen of Foreign Relations, Armed Services and Appropriations, plus the ranking majority and ranking minority members. This, as in the case of the joint committee that watchdogs the A. E. C., would give control to the party majority in each branch, which currently is Democratic.

The product of this formula, in the present make-up of these committees, would be two groups of the highest caliber and seniority in Congress, with memberships of proved discretion and great influence. In the nature of the assignment, these legislators would be restrained from passing on secret information to the other members of the committees from which they were recruited. But when these parent committees were dealing with matters in which C. I. A. activities were involved, they would have authoritative guidance now denied them. The beneficial effects of this on major legislation are obvious.

The Personnel

If the nine-member groups were chosen on the formula under discussion, only two members would encounter a problem of choice growing out of their present committee assignments. These two are Senators Russell of Georgia and Saltonstall of Massachusetts. Russell, being currently chairman of Armed Services and ranking majority member of Appropriations, would have a double eligibility of service on the C. I. A. watchdog committee. So would Saltonstall, because he is the ranking minority member on both Appropriations and Armed Services.

The indicated solution would be for Senators Byrd of Virginia and Stennis of Mississippi, who rank after Russell on Armed Services, to become its two majority members on the watchdog group. And Saltonstall's choice would be between his two ranking minority memberships, making room thereby for either Senator Young of North Dakota or Senator Smith of Maine.

The watchdog committees would then be composed of the following: (House) Chairman Cannon, Representatives Mahon and Taber, from Appropriations; Chairman Vinson, Representatives Rivers and Arends, from Armed Services; and Chairman Morgan, Representatives Zablocki and Chipperfield, from Foreign Affairs. (Senate) Chairman Hayden, Senator Russell and either Senator Saltonstall or Young, from Appropriation; Senators Byrd, Stennis and either Senator Saltonstall or Smith, from Armed Services; and Chairman Fulbright, Senators Sparkman and Wiley, from Foreign Relations.

Either Senate combination, and the House group which encounters no similar problem of selection, would provide two C. I. A. watchdog committees of exceptional quality. And the sense of "mission" that the creation of such committees imparts would be a shield against uniformed criticism that C. I. A. greatly needs, and a filter of the information Congress should have in the public interest.

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**WHITE HOUSE DENIES
ARTICLE ABOUT C.I.A.**

Special to The New York Times.
WASHINGTON, Aug. 3—
The White House described today as "inaccurate" an article appearing in The New York Times this morning outlining proposed changes in the functions and responsibilities of the Central Intelligence Agency.
Pierre Salinger, President Kennedy's press secretary, asserted that "no such decision as described in that story has been made."
He said that it was "a matter of public knowledge for some time that we have been making a wide-ranging study of the intelligence operations of the government, and a number of proposals have been made, but I can say precisely that no such proposal has been adopted or decided upon."
This newspaper article said that the Administration "is completing plans to remove from the Central Intelligence Agency its functions of overall intelligence evaluation."
This function, the article said, would be placed in the hands of a new official who would be independent in loyalty and outlook of any of the agencies responsible for intelligence collection.